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September 1945

Consumers' guide

VOLUME XI ● NUMBER 9 SEPTEMBER 1945

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ILLUSTRATIONS: *Cover, Soil Conservation Service; p. 3, Agricultural Adjustment Administration; p. 4, left to right, USDA Information, AAA, USDA Info.; p. 5, left to right, USDA Info., Farm Security Administration; pp. 6, 7, 8, USDA Info.; pp. 9, 10, 11, Rural Electrification Administration; pp. 12, 13, Commodity Credit Corporation; p. 14, Farm Security Administration; p. 16, drawings, Katharine Johnson.*

Work well done

● This month marks the second anniversary of the "A" Award. The "A" Award is a recognition which the Department of Agriculture gives to food processors who achieve outstanding accomplishments in the production of food. The Achievement "A" Award to food industry is the equivalent of the Army "E" award for outstanding production in war materials.

In awarding the "A" the Department of Agriculture considers first of all quantity and quality of production in the light of available facilities. All goods sold to the Government must meet rigid inspection requirements.

These advances in food production augur well for the consumer of the future who can demand the goods of high quality and varieties which have been produced during the war for feeding our troops and our allies.

During the past few years the American farmer continued to produce more and more food. Each year he broke the prior year's record. Most of this food had to be processed, milled, canned, dried, and frozen. It had to take many forms and be placed in many types of packages. To meet the exigencies of war it had to be prepared to meet the fog, damp, rain, and heat of the tropics, and come out nutritious and tasty to our men there. Food had to stand the rigors of the Arctic winter. It had to be put in various forms and shapes to meet the limits of transportation. It had to be condensed and canned and packed so that the greatest abundances of nourishment could be carried in the cramped space of a submarine, in a soldier's pack, or by plane. In order to do this the ingenuity and resourcefulness of the food industries were brought into full play.

Thousands of tons of "K" rations, concentrated food, to sustain the soldier in battle and on the march were made. Food was compressed, dried, and concentrated. The lemon was powdered so that a small envelope of it would bring the needed vitamins to a soldier for a day. Butter that didn't melt under tropic heat was processed. Fresh milk was frozen and shipped in cakes and thousands of tons of "tushonka"—a canned pork never made in this country before—was produced, all flavored to satisfy the taste of the Russian soldier.

In order to do the wartime feeding job the food industries, management and labor, pitched in to recognize the men and women for the work they did. The Achievement "A" Award has been given to 422 factories during the past 2 years.

The recipients of the Award include both cooperatives and private enterprise, large and small. It has been awarded to cheese factories and to manufacturers of dried ice cream mix. It has gone to factories candling, grading, and packing eggs and plants eviscerating poultry, to canners and fruit and vegetable drying plants, to processors of grain, peas, and beans, to fresh and frozen meat processors, and to fish canneries and others.

The "A" Award is represented by a flag which flies above the honored plant. It is a green flag which symbolizes the agricultural background of the food processing industry. The central design—a circle formed by a head of wheat and a steel gear—signifies production. Within the circle is a large blue "A" emblematic of achievement. A white star in the upper left-hand corner of the flag indicates a second year of outstanding accomplishment.

To the individual worker in the plant goes a pin bearing the words "Achievement Award—Food For Freedom." Every employee is entitled to wear the pin to show that his energy and devotion to duty has played a part in the contribution which the plant made to the war.

To obtain the Award, in addition to the first standards of quantity and quality of production other major factors are: Ingenuity and cooperation with the Government in developing and producing war food products; cooperation with the Government in carrying out the purposes of various food purchase programs; effective management, success in overcoming production obstacles, satisfactory management-labor relations, including the avoidance of work stoppages; training of additional labor forces, low absentee records; accident prevention, provision for health and sanitation.

That the objectives of the program were fully realized during the past 2 years is evidenced by response from food-processing plants expressing their appreciation for the Award and outlining its beneficial effects on such matters as increased production, better employee morale, improved labor-management reactions, and assistance in recruitment of labor.

The high standards which the food industry in general and the "A" Award plants in particular met in fulfilling the vast requirements of the Government for war demonstrates the capacity of the industry for peacetime. The same high requirements of inspection and quality can be demanded by the consumer after the war. And on the basis of quality food produced in quantity and at low prices, each consumer can award his own award.

The Editor

CONSUMERS' GUIDE *Issued Monthly*
A Publication of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.
Editor, Ben James; *associate editor,* Anne Carter; *contributing writers,* Elizabeth Spence, Elinor Price; *art,* June Mose. CONSUMERS' GUIDE is printed with the approval of the Bureau of the Budget as required by Rule 42 of the Joint Committee on Printing. Official free distribution is limited. Additional copies may be obtained from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C., 5 cents a copy, or by subscription, 50 cents a year, domestic; 70 cents a year, foreign. Postage stamps will not be accepted in payment.

Food insurance

By protecting farmers from losses, price support protects consumers from shortages.

● Ask the man in the street or the housewife at the market, *Are you in favor of all-out food production?* Right now the answer would most likely be a loud and echoing *YES*, with no *if's* or *but's* added.

By their actions America's 6 million farm families have shown that they, too, are convinced. At the urging of Uncle Sam they have expanded food production since the war began until in 1944 it was 38 percent above prewar. A very good thing they did, too—for still we aren't having nearly as much to eat of some foods as we would like to have and can afford to buy.

The New Secretary of Agriculture is on record as favoring expanded food production. President Truman has also made a special plea for Victory Gardens to add to the harvest of our farms. Everybody wants enough food.

With such agreement from all sides, it would seem on first thought that the food production problem is as good as settled—that given the green light from all and sundry our farmers can without more ado go full blast ahead and produce everything that's needed until, presto! we have plenty. A lovely thought, that, to brighten the dreams. In time, yes, but the dream can't come true tomorrow. For there is much more to the food production problem than the eager eater is apt to remember as he consumes his not-so-bad but sometimes monotonous wartime food.

Since everybody in these United States is concerned with the problem of abundant food production, let's consider some of the angles involved. In order to reach the goal of plenty of food many questions must be answered, many obstacles overcome.

How much food is enough, for instance? That's really a tough question, because to dope it out exactly the people who decide would need to know things that nobody this side of heaven can know with final certainty—such as when the war will end, what kind of farming weather we'll have in the various sections of the country, what the needs of the liberated countries will be, and how much money American civilians will have to spend for food. The farmer, too, needs to have some idea of the price he'll get for his farm products—if the price drops too low he can't stay long in business. Practically all of this year's crops have been planted. It's too late now to step up production this year to any marked degree, though within certain limits farmers by extra effort in tending and harvesting their crops can increase somewhat the yields of many crops. But remember, there's a limit to the work farmers can do, no matter how willing and patriotic they may be. On July 1 the outlook for total food production this year was not far below the record production of 1944. Hence, there's no cause for alarm, but we could use all the extra food that's likely to be produced—and more!

Until this year's harvest is in, farmers themselves won't have much leisure to make their 1946 farm production plans. But already in Washington the information which farmers will need to set next year's production goal is being assembled. Spokesmen representing the armed forces, lend-lease, and civilian requirements, the liberated peoples, and neutral countries will present the needs of all groups who are depending on American farms for all or part of their food supplies for the year ahead. The total needs will be balanced against the production capacity of American farms, taking account of our total farm acreage, numbers of livestock on farms, food and feed in storage, farm machinery, labor, transportation, and processing and storage facilities.

When total requests for a commodity exceed supplies which can be produced, individual requests are reviewed and scaled down. Well before planting time next year the Department of Agriculture will indicate to farmers the need to meet these requirements.

Cost of Enough

Remember, we are agreed that the goal of farm production should be *enough*. But it's been aptly said that: The cost of *enough* is sometimes *too much*. The Nation's 6 million farms cannot be expected to turn out exactly the right amount of every kind of food with the precision of an assembly line turning out an order of bombers. The weather is far too fickle for that. And the pace of the war is too unpredictable anyhow to forecast exactly how much we'll need for how long. Then there are hard-to-foretell changes in people's buying power which influence food purchases.

To be safe, we can't assume that Japan is going to crumble in the near future. So our farm plants as well as our munition plants must be kept at high gear for as long as it takes to smash Japan.

Uncle Sam has contracted to pay for the output of all the tanks and jeeps on order, has even supplied the money to build some of the war plants and is obligated to lend a hand in industrial reconversion.

But what about the farmer, if his fields are planted to war crops and the war should come to a sudden end?

This question came up in the early days of World War II when farmers were first asked to increase production. They remembered what happened after the last war when farm prices took a nose dive. To guarantee farmers against such a loss—a loss which they and the country could ill afford—Congress directed the Department of Agriculture to support prices of war-needed crops. For certain basic crops and for crops which have been proclaimed as war crops this support is to continue for 2 years after the first January after the end of the war—thus giving farmers time to adjust their production to peacetime needs.

Looking ahead to the peace it should be remembered that we'll still want to eat—that our soldiers will continue to have a big appetite when they don their "civvies" once again — that food needs of the war-torn countries will be heavy—and that it will take some time for world food production to come back.

But still the end of the war will bring a big decrease in the need for certain crops. And farmers who patriotically expanded production need protection against the price-depressing supplies which may pile up because we can't afford to produce too little in wartime.

To be safe in planning food production you can't assume that the weather will be above average. Reasonable caution requires that estimates be based on average weather conditions. A little difference in the weather can make a big difference in our food supplies. And to be fairly sure of having enough it's sometimes wise to take a chance on having too much. But the individual farmer can't afford to assume the entire risk of growing more than he'll be able to sell. And that brings us back to price support, again.

Potato Problem

What happened to the bumper potato crop in 1943 illustrates how price support protects farmers against losses and consumers against short supplies.

In anticipation of a heavy wartime demand for potatoes, farmers were asked to increase their potato plantings about 17 percent above those of 1942.

Average yields were used in estimating what the potato acreage goal should be, but farmers exceeded the goal and yields turned out to be exceptionally high. In late June 1943 more potatoes were being harvested than the market was prepared to absorb even under normal conditions. Early potatoes don't keep well at any time, but at that particular time the situation was especially unfavorable. Heavy rainfall had caused the spuds to absorb unusually large amounts of water. This in combination with the extremely hot weather that was prevailing at the time rendered the potatoes so perishable that distributors were afraid to buy them.

It was a near disaster but the disaster was averted. Besides working with the trade to inform the public that then was the time for all good potato eaters to come to the aid of the farmers and take advantage of abundant supplies, Uncle Sam bought potatoes to keep the prices from sagging.

Note that Uncle Sam first helped all that he could to get those potatoes moving in normal channels. Uncle Sam didn't want to get into the potato business, in other words. But on the other hand the various agricultural agencies of the Federal Government were charged by Congress, and had pledged, to do what they could to maintain the potato price in return for the farmers' efforts to expand production to reach war goals.

What happened to the perishable potatoes that Uncle Sam bought?

Some of the potatoes were eaten by our armed forces, some were distributed thro school lunch programs, some were can for lend-lease, some were dried, some w manufactured into starch which was urgen needed in the manufacture of parach cloth and other war uses. These were accepted commercial uses for potatoes. O after all these means of disposing of t potatoes had been exhausted were the pos bilities of using the surplus potatoes f livestock feed explored.

Yes, it cost the USDA money to buy tho potatoes. But it was a good investme when you figure that it was a kind of insu ance premium to assure that we'd keep having enough potatoes. If potato growe had taken a beating on prices they probab would have cut way down on their pota planting the next year. If that had ha pened we might have had a potato famin that would have been bad in combinatio with tight supplies of some other food

Egg Problem

What's happened to eggs illustrates ho much difference a change in eating habi can make in the supply situation. It's har for the ordinary eater to believe that the p capita civilian egg supply for 1945 is 2 percent above the prewar supply, but it's fact. Only it doesn't seem that way becaus the demand is so great that it's hard to fin eggs in the stores.

The first few months of this year co sumption was at the rate of about 400 egg per person a year—well over an egg a da Our egg supplies weren't enough to enabl us to keep on eating at that rate.

Why the sudden yen for eggs? Yo probably know the answer: More money an less meat.

A year ago last spring, incidentally, egg were so plentiful that there wasn't enoug space to store 'em. As in the case of pot

Food purchases go up when incomes rise. Our 1944 consumption broke all records.

Civilian consumption of fresh fluid milk is up 25 percent above prewar years.

Lots of dairy products are needed to feed our armed forces, too!

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toes, the Department of Agriculture was obligated to step in to support prices for farmers. Otherwise egg prices might well have dropped so low that many poultrymen would have been driven out of business. If that had happened on a large scale, the present egg "shortage" would seem to be a feast in comparison.

Many Angles

Unquestionably there are many angles to producing enough food. Just to name a few: There's the *consumer* angle and the *farm* angle; the *price* angle and, linked with it, the *price-support* angle. There's the *taxpayer* angle. All are important.

It's plainly to the consumer's interest to have an abundance of good food at fair prices. As consumers, then, we put in our order for all-out food production now and for plentiful supplies after the war.

But are we willing and able to pay the *price?* Unless he is assured a fair return for his labor and investment, the farmer will cut down his production.

Unquestionably Americans have the appetite to supply a large postwar market for food—provided they have the income to buy.

Consumption of fluid milk has increased 25 percent since the war began. Undoubtedly it would have gone higher if we hadn't needed the remainder of our record milk production to meet war needs for cheese, evaporated milk, and dried milk. We'd probably eat meat on an average of 165 to 170 pounds apiece this year *if we had the meat.* The same thing is true of other high grade foods which low-income families can't afford to buy except occasionally in limited quantities. As wages have gone up, working families have been buying more of these foods and farmers have been benefiting from their purchases. Definitely, farmers have a real stake in the maintenance of high incomes for industrial workers.

When it comes to the matter of *price,* there are two sides to the question.

Buyers naturally want to get their goods as cheaply as they can. On the other hand, everybody would be the loser if food prices dropped so low that farmers and distributors were driven out of buisness. The cost of bargain food prices would in fact prove to be much too high if they started us in a depression tail spin.

On the other hand, runaway food prices are just as undesirable and dangerous. What would be the good in producing an abundance of food if only the people in the upper income brackets could afford it? The farmer wouldn't be any richer and the food would be wasted. Besides, if food prices were to zoom out of line, the families with fixed income, the old people, children, and widows on pensions would suffer. Workers would need higher wages and the whole price structure would be whirled upward in an inflationary spiral. That's the reason for price control for food.

Maintaining a fair price—neither too high nor too low—for farm products is highly important from a business angle as well as as from a consumer or farmer angle.

In accordance with authorization from Congress the U. S. Department of Agriculture is to support certain crops at 90 percent of parity. The parity formula for farm prices, incidentally, is designed to give the farmer the same returns in terms of purchasing power from a bushel of potatoes or a pound of beans that he received in the parity base years when farmers were normally prosperous.

Uncle Sam supports farm prices in a number of ways. Sometimes it's by nonrecourse commodity loans which enable the farmer to hold his wheat or cotton for more favorable prices or to dispose of it to the Government if the prices stay too low. In other cases the Government steps in with purchases to put a floor under prices. Sometimes, as with canned vegetables, the Government makes payments to processors who have agreed to pay support prices to growers. In the case of milk, direct payments were made to farmers to defray part of the increased costs for expanding production.

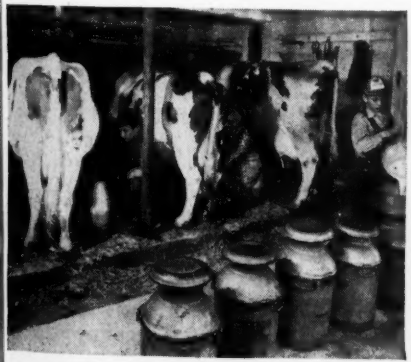
Because of the dairy production payment, farmers have been able to sell the milk cheaper than they otherwise could—and the consumers have benefited by the lower milk prices. Keeping up the production and keeping down the price of milk are very important for the health of America at war. So the taxpayer, who is also a consumer and a citizen, can figure the money thus spent to increase milk production is well spent.

While urging the necessity for continued support of farm prices, James Byrnes in his report as Director of War Mobilization and Reconversion states: "Situations may arise . . . in which it would ultimately cost the Government less, and be to the long-time interest of producers, to permit the prices to decline below the authorized support level, and make up the difference with direct Government payments."

In a later report to the President and Congress Fred Vinson urged that this idea be given thorough study. He said that direct payments have the advantage of permitting the consumer to get more for his money, thus encouraging increased consumption.

Many families can't afford to buy all the food they need. If we can devise a way to get more food to these families after the war, there shouldn't be much of a problem in using abundant crops.

Expansion of the school lunch program would enlarge postwar markets for food as well as build up the strength of our future citizens. Plans of many industrial plants to continue their feeding programs after the war should also provide a big outlet for foods. Also the success of the stamp plan as a device for increasing the purchasing power of low-income families and moving farm crops in the era before the war demonstrates the feasibility of adapting some such plan to avoid postwar "surpluses." "Surpluses" isn't the right word, however, for there won't be any surplus food until everybody has enough to eat, and we're still a long way from reaching that goal. How soon we'll reach the goal of plenty for all, or how we'll reach it, is up to us.



Dairy production payments helped farmers to meet colossal wartime needs for milk.

Help stretch our food supplies by buying perishable foods during marketing peaks!

Diplomas for canned foods

"Packed under continuous inspection of the U. S. Department of Agriculture" says these diplomas which more and more thousands of cans and jars are earning. Shoppers are learning to look for the statement. Here's what it means.

● "Continuous inspection" means just what it says: inspection of food so marked is continuous during processing. It goes on all the time, beginning with the trucks of fresh fruits and vegetables at the unloading platform of the plant, on through every step of the processing and finally, samples of the finished product are chosen at random, and checked for grades.

And just as colleges must meet certain standards before they can give B. A. degrees, so plants must come up to definite standards before they can have the benefit of continuous inspection by a representative of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Begun in 1939, frankly as an experiment to see how consumers would like the idea of *knowing* for certain that food was prepared and processed under hygienic conditions, and to carry out packers' interests in the welfare of their ultimate buyers, continuous inspection has now become a reality. The careful housekeeping practices of a well-run home kitchen are being carried out in large-scale commercial processing plants.

The Department of Agriculture selected and approved only one plant to begin its experiment. The next year three packers asked for Government inspectors to carry out continuous inspection in their plants. At present about 80 firms are using processed food inspectors and proudly marking their products "Packed under continuous inspection of the U. S. Department of Agriculture."

Plants are always carefully selected by the Department before inspectors are assigned. Small plants, as well as large plants, may be approved to have inspectors continuously on hand during a processing season. The plant and management must fit the pattern laid down by the Department for a clean, orderly, properly maintained establishment.

Not every processing factory will meet the strict requirements of sanitation. Only those plants that are willing to create and uphold the sanitation standards in all aspects are considered.

The premises are surveyed carefully beforehand to see that surrounding roads are surfaced properly, that the buildings are neatly painted or built to allow thorough cleansing of the interior, especially in the processing rooms. Plants must be located near the source of raw fruits or vegetables so that crops may be processed with as little delay as possible. The water supply must be pure and disposal of plant waste and other sewage is required to be handled properly. Were it not for these basic requirements, products might reach the consumer in a sandy or gritty condition, the fruits or vegetables might be wilted or decayed, and liquid on the processed product contaminated. Piles of vegetation and other refuse form a breeding place for vermin.

In addition to the physical condition of the premises, every step in processing must be maintained at a high level. Daily, often twice daily, "scrub-downs" are needed to cleanse equipment and floors of the juice and refuse from the preparation tables. Mechanical equipment needs constant cleaning and flushing to keep out pits, seeds, peelings, and other adhering materials. Workers, too, must do their part. Hair coverings, neat aprons or uniforms, and rubber gloves when food is being handled, are items of personal cleanliness that help packers maintain good housekeeping goals.

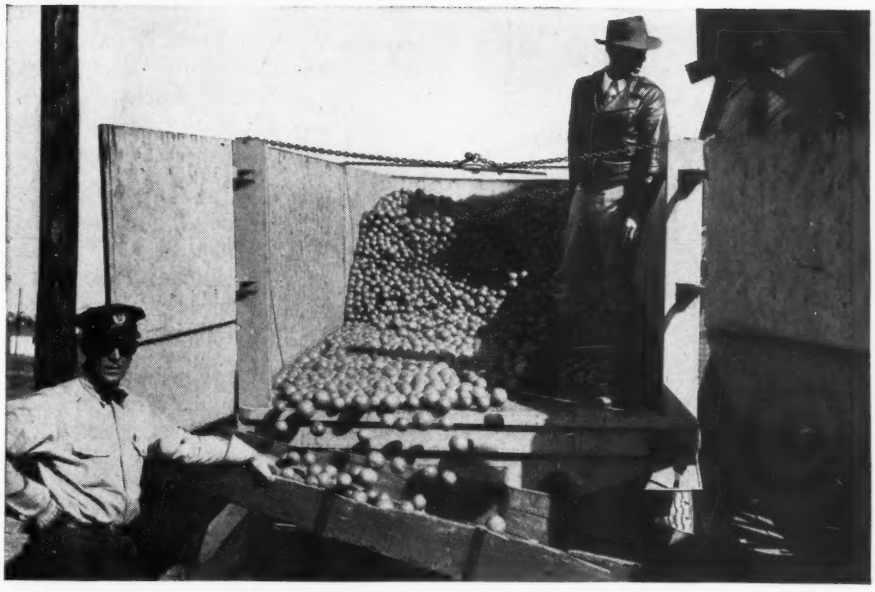
Sufficient light in all working sections is provided so that employees may not be hampered in doing their best to improve the quality of the product. Some plants are equipped with fluorescent lights. Hygienic habits are cheerfully followed by workers. Signs in the lavatories warn—"Hands must

be washed thoroughly with soap and water before returning to duty." The use of tobacco or smoking is not permitted in processing rooms where food is being prepared or packed.

All in all—this is a big order for the packer, but he does it willingly to carry out his part of the bargain. That is the reason he has voluntarily requested a white-uniformed inspector from the U. S. Department of Agriculture to see that he maintains his practice of packing quality products under sanitary requirements.

Under the careful scrutiny of the Federal inspector, the raw materials come in to the factory from the farmer or grower. As the products flow through the plant—from washers to cutters, to sizers, to peelers, and along white moving belts where defective portions are removed—the inspector's eye follows the movement to the cooking process. Inspection does not stop here. Even after the containers are sealed and put through the cookers, temperatures and the time of processing must be carefully checked and handling of the processed goods must be observed until they reach their spot in the warehouse. Then, after finally arriving in the storage space alloted, several containers of the finished product are selected at random—from every section of each stack—to be inspected.

Grading of the completed and processed product rests with the inspector. After the various steps of the analysis are completed an official Government certificate is issued. It denotes the quality and gives other important information about the product.

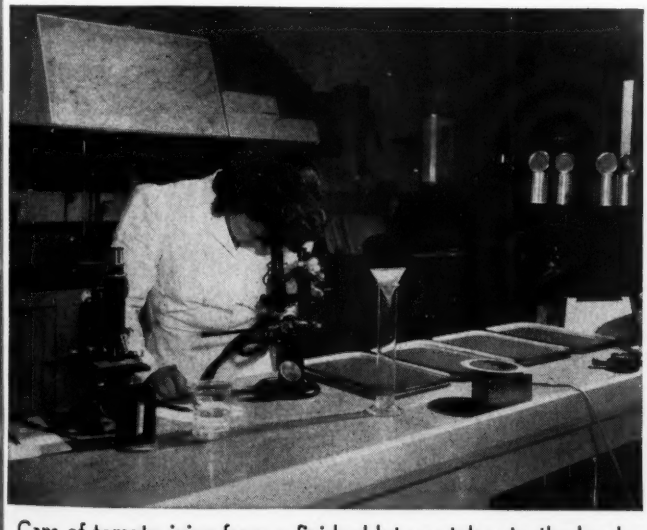


Oranges start on their trip through a Florida processing plant, while the Federal-State inspector checks the quality of this truckload for canning.

These qualities are by no means unwritten or theoretical. Each quality symbolizes many factors that are considered mutually important by both processors and consumers. Intensive research and cooperation with the producers and packers of the foods over a period of many years have determined the features that make food appetizing from the standpoint of flavor and appearance. These detailed requirements are published in United States Standards for Grades of the individual product.

With color charts, scales, mechanical devices, and by chemical methods the inspector judges separately the parts of the product which determine its quality. These technical results will give the final answer as to quality. Most processed products (canned, dried, and frozen fruits and vegetables) that reach the housewife are one of three grades:

(1) Grade A or Fancy.



Cans of tomato juice from a finished lot are taken to the local laboratory of the U. S. Department of Agriculture for sampling. Here juice is inspected microscopically for mold count.

A Federal inspector checks work and equipment as tomatoes move along endless belt. Clean dresses and hair coverings are required of women operators in continuous inspection plants.

(2) Grade B or Extra Standard (for vegetables) or Choice (for fruits).

(3) Grade C or Standard.

But, labels on containers will not always say so. Labels may or may not bear an index to the quality of the contents.

If *Grade A* or *Fancy* is found on a label it means a first-rate food, carefully selected and processed to produce a uniform size, high color, and the ultimate in ripeness or tenderness. Because of their fine appearance, foods of this grade are best suited for special dishes, fancy desserts, and for combinations, such as fruit salads. If the label reads "U. S. Grade A" or "U. S. Fancy" the *U. S.* indicates the added feature that the food was packed in clean surroundings and under the sanitary methods required of continuous factory inspection and that the quality was certified by a USDA inspector.

Grade B or *Extra Standard* (sometimes called "Choice" for fruits) indicates the product may not be so carefully selected as to size, color, and maturity as for Grade A, but the quality is very good for most menus and is a suitable quality for general household uses. Again, if "U. S." appears on the label before the quality names of Grade B, Extra Standard, or Choice, the consumer is assured that the product was packed under continuous inspection.

Grade C or *Standard* comprises a lot of good, wholesome foods which are often a "thrifty buy." For dishes in which appearance is not too important and in which the product is cooked further, Grade C is an intelligent selection. Casserole dishes, pies, sherbets, and soups are among the many possibilities for using Grade C foods. Processed products of this grade may also be packed under continuous inspection and the labels may show the distinguishing mark of "U. S." with the quality name.

In addition to the U. S. grade, these labels also carry helpful information, such as the size of can, number of pieces in a container, number of servings, the variety or style of a fruit or vegetable, and the use for the product. A smart shopper will buy the quality best suited for her purpose.

Even without the "U. S." accompanying a quality designation, products marked under continuous inspection may carry the distinctive statement:

Packed under
continuous inspection
of the
U. S. Dept. of
Agriculture

The two letters—U. S.—carry out this meaning also. Only fruits and vegetables that are processed under the continuous observance of the USDA inspectors are permitted to carry "U. S." on the label. These letters may be found on labels in a number of ways. Often they appear in a shield.

Easy means of identification is the shield stamped in the bottom of a metal container, or on the lid of a glass container.

Who Pays?

The canner pays a fee sufficient to cover the salaries of the inspectors plus 15 percent for the overhead of the service. These fees are paid to the U. S. Treasury. The next question is usually, doesn't the consumer have to pay for it in an increased price for inspected canned food? The cost of inspection per can is so small that it is impossible to pass it along in the retail price, ⅓ to ¾ of a cent for a case of 24 No. 2's, for instance. Two to four ten-thousandths (.0004) of a cent per can has been given as the probable average figure. And even this tiny amount may be more than made up by reductions in expense which result from continuous inspection.

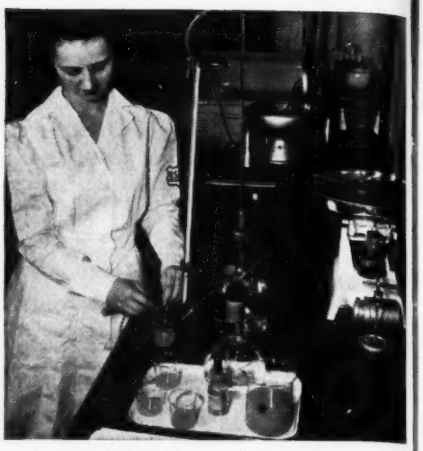
Benefits from continuous inspection are far-reaching to others besides the consumer.

First of all, farmers or growers may benefit from selling produce for processing to plants using continuous factory inspection. The packers' plans to produce high-quality goods will serve as an incentive for the producers to raise and furnish more high-quality raw stock.

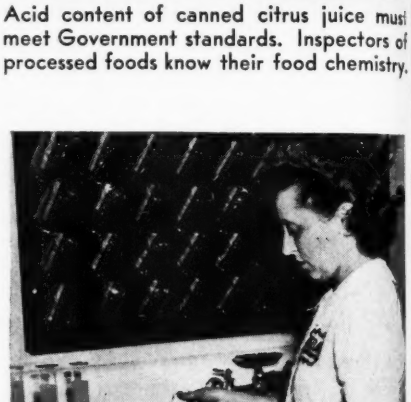
Bankers are interested in continuous factory inspection. Financing agencies will have confidence in the reputable packer who can furnish legal evidence of the quality of goods upon which money may be loaned.

Marketers, such as distributors and wholesalers, are becoming more and more concerned with consumers' preferences. They realize that if homemakers like U. S. grade-labeled foods and use more processed fruits and vegetables, the retailer will wish to be supplied to fit the needs of his patrons.

Testimony from many packers who use the service is uniformly enthusiastic. They point out the sales value of the Government stamp of approval and state that it gives both the industry and buyers more protection. Thus, everyone from grower to consumer stands to benefit from the continuous inspection service.



Acid content of canned citrus juice must meet Government standards. Inspectors of processed foods know their food chemistry.



Sample in flask must match proper square in Dictionary of Color. Color standards are accurate for processed foods.

A pinch of salt for canned tomato juice. Automatic salting machine does the work while processed foods inspector watches.

Wired for better living

● In vast parts of rural America the clock has stopped at half-past the nineteenth century. There the oil lamp and outdoor pump still symbolize the life of farmer and family. Far from being picturesque—as those who believe in "the good old days" might suppose—it's a life of unnecessary drudgery and of no particular credit to the Nation as a whole.

At least so Congress decided in 1935 when through Emergency Appropriations Act funds and an Executive Order the Rural Electrification Administration was born. At that time, not more than 11 percent of the 6 million farms in the United States got central station electric service. And those fortunate few lay along or near highways having urban high lines. Farms isolated in the hills or on back roads just plain couldn't afford the prohibitive price of building lines and paying for current after the service was connected.

Those were depression days. And the Emergency Appropriations Act was the stone aimed to kill two lacks—the farmers' lack of electricity, the workers' lack of jobs.

The next year—when it had become apparent that rural electrification needed a long-term program—Congress passed the Rural Electrification Act of 1936.

Specifically, the act authorized REA to lend funds to cooperatives, public utility districts, municipalities, or private companies. The direct purpose: To finance construction and operation of power lines and, wherever necessary, power plants; to finance the wiring of rural establishments and purchase of appliances by those receiving service. Congress specified that applications from nonprofit and limited-profit groups were to get preference.

Loans were to be made at low interest rates and over long periods of time. To the farmer all these provisions promised cheap electricity. And such legislation has resulted in cheap rural electricity partly because of three working principles hit upon by REA.

The first of these was to make electricity available to all places within a defined area —to farms, churches, schools, nonfarm dwellings, and industries. The second was to redesign equipment—simplifying the costly and strengthening the less expensive. As a result, engineers made cheap but durable lines, developed a simple type pole with no cross arms, and used longer spans and stronger conductors.

The third principle was to use mass production methods for building lines—methods which REA worked out: In the first step a laboring crew cleared the right-of-way and dug holes for new poles. In the second, a crew came along to erect poles and hardware. Lastly, a third crew strung the wires.

Such principles reduced the cost per mile from a potential $3,000 to $900 in some parts of the country and in other sections to less than $500 a mile.

In the years that followed the birth of REA, rates per kilowatt hour have likewise grown cheaper. And in areas influenced by the Tennessee Valley Authority, Boulder Dam, Grand Coulee, Bonneville, and Southwestern Power Administration wholesale rates have slid to little more than half the average for the Nation.

Although some 55 percent of rural America still lives by the dim glow of the oil lamp, REA did quicken the spread of rural electricity. Between 1935 and 1944 the number of farms electrified increased from 740,000 to 2,577,000.

As of March 31, 1945, REA had loaned $416,000,000 through municipal systems, public utility distributors, private companies, and cooperatives. In principal and interest, 91 million dollars have been paid back—19 million dollars in advance of the due date, while payments in arrears amounted to only $415,000.

Undoubtedly the march of rural electrification would have been faster and over wider territory had not the war halted work in 1941. Even so, some progress has been made during war years since the War Production Board, realizing that farms had to produce despite labor shortages, released stocks of certain materials and manpower to manufacture electrical lines and building equipment.

Now with the growing promise of a dawning V-J Day, Rural Electrification Administration is making postwar plans with, briefly, these objectives in mind: Electric service to all rural people and full use of electricity on the farmstead, for rural welfare, and in developing local rural industries.

Gateway to a new world! Electric lines carry modern living to farmsteads.

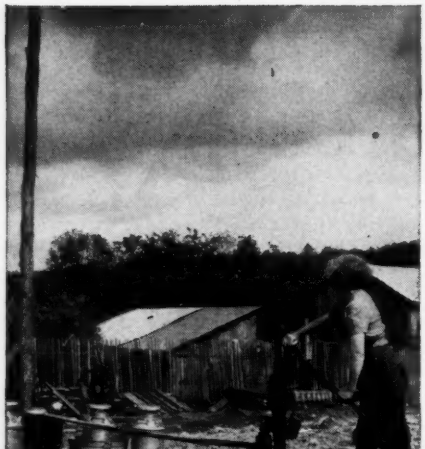
To see how this expansion can actually take place, let's consider Farmer Brown.

Driving home one night from an REA co-op meeting, Farmer Brown reflected on the postwar plans for rural electrification—plans he'd just heard about that mightily concerned men and women who would be looking for jobs when the war was won.

For a moment as he rode along, he thought he could see in the frosty moonlight an army of servicemen and women who disappeared at the dip in the road and came into view again on the opposite slope dressed as workers—as plumbers, electricians, welders, machine operators, stenographers, clerks, salesmen, engineers.

More than a million workers, working a year would be needed to carry out the postwar plans of the Rural Electrification Administration. And that—as the speaker of the meeting had pointed out to Farmer Brown's co-op group—was just a byproduct of the larger plan to bring electricity to millions of rural dwellers. REA planned to invest about a half billion dollars for the next few years, he said.

The United States needed such an investment. Farmer Brown, like many an American, had always taken for granted the frequent supposition that his own Nation was the most advanced in all things in all the world. He was surprised to learn that before World War II, electrification in Denmark had reached 85 percent of the rural dwellings; in Germany 90 percent; in



Wasted, in back bending and water toting, enough energy to do a dozen chores.

Saved, by the use of electric pump, long hours for better living indoors and out.

France 95 percent; and in Holland nearly 100 percent, while the United States lagged behind with a mere 40 percent. Of course, it was true that the European countries were thickly settled while the rural population of the United States was scattered. And because the population was scattered, it was expensive to reach with electric lines and current—that is—under any profit-making scheme.

But not under the REA cooperative plan as Farmer Brown knew from experience.

He'd been one of the most pigheaded at first—insisting that no farmer like him could afford electricity. That was back in 1939 when he was taking in little cash during the year. When his wife, Molly, out of the blue one night said, "Why can't we have electricity?" he'd been irritated at such a stupid question. Not a township around had electricity. What did she expect him to do, pull it out of a hat?

But he'd laid her insistence to the fact that she'd just been taking care of her sister in the southern part of the State where folks had electricity, and then she had come back to look after their son's wife in the old farm house with the coal stove, oil lamps, and outdoor pump. How could she help feeling the difference between having and not having? Too, it had been the middle of the night while they were wrapping up the new pigs to bring them into the house where it was warm. He hadn't answered her.

Not until the next morning when she asked again, and then he told her that it cost money to string lines from the high lines and he couldn't afford it.

When she replied that the Government could build lines cheaply and all he had to do was belong to a cooperative, he said:

"What cooperative?"

"You could start one," she told him.

The idea had made him laugh but it rankled, too. It rankled while he pumped water for the stock, sharpened his tools by foot treadle, and chopped wood by hand. Electricity could save him thousands of steps and a lot of elbow grease. But he couldn't afford it, and that was that!

From then on everything that happened seemed to point up their lack. Young Bud came home from school after a particularly dark day and complained of a sick headache from "those dinky oil lamps at school." Little Molly tripped in the pitch black on her way to the barn and hurt her ankle. Along came the heaviest snowfall of the season, and the chore of getting water to the stock seemed endless.

When the county agent came by one day Farmer Brown talked to him. What was this new business of getting electricity through the Government?

This is what the county agent told him:

In the first place the idea was not new. It was based on the organization of cooperatives, and the cooperative movement was some hundred years old embracing 100 million families in 40 countries.

Just what was a cooperative? Farmer Brown wanted to know. Well, in this case, it would be a group of neighboring farmers and other rural dwellers banded together and incorporated. Their purpose would be to supply electricity to each co-op member at the lowest possible cost.

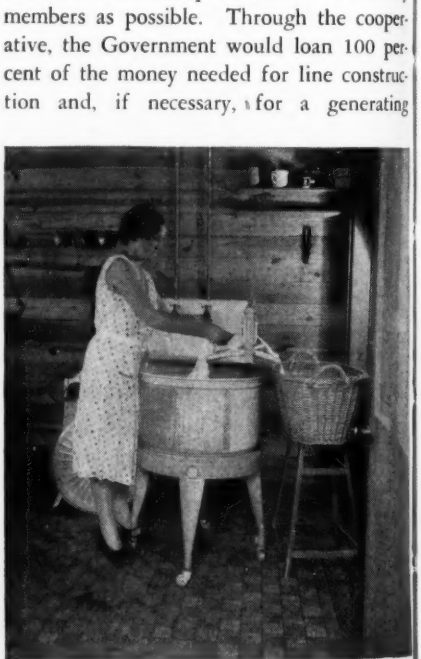
It would be best, the county agent told Farmer Brown, to write to the REA office and in the meantime to get a great many prospective co-op members to sign up. He advised Farmer Brown to get signers not only in his own township but all around that part of the State—farmers like himself who wanted electricity, who would agree to have their dwellings wired, and to use the electricity when they got it. The more signers—folks who could be trusted to stick to their agreement—the lower the costs.

Right after church the next Sunday, Farmer Brown talked to his neighbors, but they were skeptical. How did it happen the Government could bring them cheap electricity when utilities could not? It would all come out of taxes, they said.

Then the county agent brought an REA representative to the schoolhouse, Farmer Brown and his neighbors packed the hall to listen.

And this is what the REA man said:

The Rural Electrification Administration was set up for the express purpose of bringing electricity to farmers. The first step for a community like Farmer Brown's was to form an REA cooperative with as many members as possible. Through the cooperative, the Government would loan 100 percent of the money needed for line construction and, if necessary, for a generating



Servant to farmers' wives, electricity handles big tasks on washday.

plant. Through the co-op, the Government would loan money for house wiring and for installation of modern plumbing—all at low interest rates. Moreover, the REA would give the co-op advice in legal, operational, and engineering matters.

Again, Farmer Brown and his neighbors wanted to know why the Government could help them to electricity cheaply when private utilities could not.

First, REA engineers have worked out specifications for line construction which make it possible to build durable lines at about half the cost once figured by private companies.

Then REA makes loans over long periods of time at a low interest charge.

And cooperatives can usually get low wholesale energy rates. Or failing that, a co-op may set up a generating plant to produce its own electricity.

Finally, REA cooperatives have no investors demanding money profits.

Even so, Farmer Brown and his neighbors had lingering in their minds a picture of the burdened taxpayer. Once more the REA man explained: The rural electrification project is self-liquidating. In other words, Uncle Sam loans money to the farmers but he gets his money back with interest. That clinched the discussion, and Farmer Brown's community went to work. They talked with the editor of the weekly newspaper who promised to push the campaign. They sought help from all the leaders in the townships roundabout. They ran a contest and offered prizes for the township that could collect the most signers. The school children wrote essays on the advantages of electricity. The women discussed the pamphlets that came from REA and in the end knew more of the pros and cons than some of their menfolk.

Finally the co-op was formed with a board of directors duly elected and a manager appointed. Then for a while trouble set in. Fred—the most popular man in the county—got the job as manager because the board thought he'd get along with everyone. They soon found out that wasn't enough. A manager needed organizing ability.

Fortunately, Fred saw for himself that the work was too much for him, and he gave up the job to a more capable man.

Then they had trouble with legislation. Down in the State capitol, someone proposed a bill that would have divided the State among seven utility companies. Farmer Brown and his neighbors soon learned what that would mean. "Cream-skimming," the REA man called it. High lines would travel the main highways and reach into the more thickly settled areas close by. The rest of the rural dwellers beyond the fringe would be obligated to pay prohibitive prices for electricity or continue to struggle along in an oil-lamp civilization. The bad part was that the legislators thought the farmers favored the bill.

But again fortune smiled. The legislators adjourned before the bill came up for vote, and in the following interim Farmer Brown and the rest of the co-op members rustled up letters and petitions. Weekly papers published editorials. In the end the bill died a natural death.

From then on construction moved swiftly. Many of the farmers earned a part of their costs by doing the jobs that required hard work but no particular skill or training. They dug holes for setting the electric poles, trimmed branches, cleared out underbrush, and felled trees along the right-of-way.

Then one night Farmer Brown was in the cellar sorting potatoes by the dim glow of a lantern when someone knocked on the window and yelled down.

"You'll ruin your eyes. Why don't you turn on the electric lights."

"Wish I could," Farmer Brown shouted back good-naturedly.

"Don't wish, man. Press the button."

That's how Farmer Brown learned that electricity had at last come to his farm. He and his family were soon used to the convenience, taking it pretty much for granted. His wife grew accustomed to her washing machine, her electric iron, refrigerator, and electric sweeper. He became used to hitching up a motor to cut his ensilage, chop his wood, grind the corn, sharpen his tools. His daughter took it for granted that each year she would make about $75 raising plants in her hotbed.

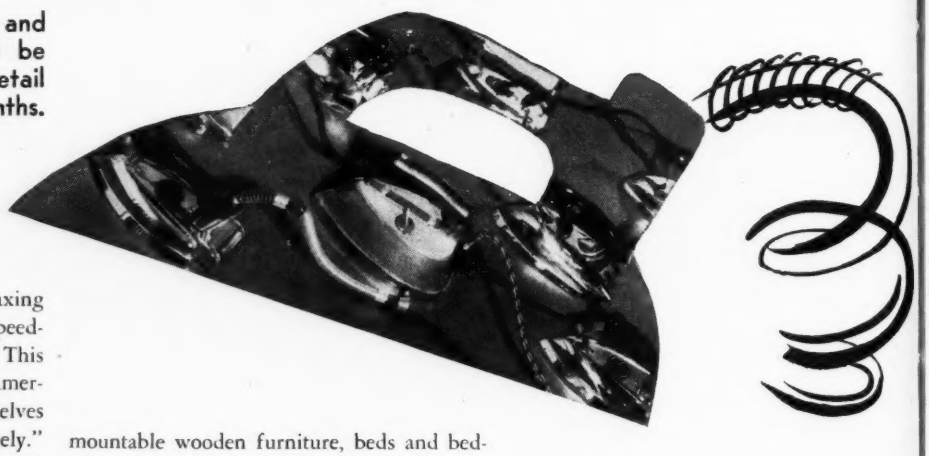
The electric milker and milk cooler had helped him sell more and better milk at a time when it was desperately needed. Bright lights in the barnyard made it possible for him to store his crops at night. A lighted hen house had increased egg laying when prices were high. A brooder had protected baby chicks. Best of all, he decided, was the water—fountains at every cow stanchion troughs in the pasture. Hours of pumping and miles of steps saved just in watering the stock alone.

Yes, the co-op speaker had been right when he said Rural Electrification Administration would *invest* a little more than half a billion dollars to bring electricity to rural areas. Invest was the exact word, Farmer Brown decided. Multiply his own young folks by millions and his own community by thousands all over the United States, and the money loaned would bring back to a Nation returns far greater than any dollar sign could convey.

Away with farmyard blackouts! One bright light can do much to discourage unwelcome prowlers and prevent sprained ankles.

How much consumer goods?

Here are facts about amounts and kinds of commodities that will be finding their way back to the retail market during the next few months.



● "The War Production Board is relaxing and canceling its wartime controls as speedily as the one-front war will permit. This does not mean, however, that . . . the American public can expect to see store shelves stocked with civilian items immediately."

Many consumers realize that these words of the Chairman of the WPB make sense. Of course, you can't expect factories that have been making radar equipment to produce within 4 months after V-E Day enough radio parts to stock the shelves of retail stores and repair shops. Of course, you can't expect to walk into the local department store and spend pleasant hours wandering through the various sections deciding which of the many commodities to buy.

Yet consumers—denied for almost 3 years of their inalienable right to purchase whatever their pocketbooks could bear—had, emotionally at least, placed considerable hope in V-E Day and the flood of goods and services which would flow from that overwhelming victory. And now that this restocking of consumer durable goods has not happened as quickly and as thoroughly as they had hoped civilians want to know *why;* they want to know *what* they can realistically expect; and they want to know *when* they can recapture completely the freedom to consume.

The "brave new" postwar world has not materialized nor has the return to "normalcy" been particularly noticeable. The dislocations of materials and manpower caused by more than 3 years of war cannot be reshuffled overnight. Certain materials will remain absent from civilian supplies as long as there is a war, even as certain labor pools will have to stick to the war job as long as there is a war job to do.

Yet, within these limitations, production and distribution of small quantities of certain types of consumer durable goods are going forward. Alarm clocks, razor blades, electric toasters, cameras, bicycles, demountable wooden furniture, beds and bedsprings, sewing machines, electric fans and irons, aluminum utensils, carpet sweepers, table flatware, ranges, and automobiles are in production after a lapse, in some cases, of more than 3 years. In addition, some of these products will actually appear on retail shelves by the end of September; there will be more by December; and by summer of next year the supplies of some items will begin to move normally into retail channels. Supplies of many others, however, will continue small in relation both to prewar production and postwar demands.

So long as there is an American Army waging war there will have to be production as well as distribution controls over many items desired by the American people. Items over which all Government production controls have been removed may still have to be rationed among essential users—and only a few civilians will be considered as essential users.

On the other commodities from which both production and distribution controls have been completely removed there still won't be enough within the next 6 months to take care of the consumer who wants merely to replace and the one who wants to acquire for the first time. So long as the supplies of all goods do not meet prewar figures the ordinary consumer had better develop resistance to glittering, shiny new equipment.

The housewife who has a sewing machine or a vacuum cleaner had better stay out of the market so that the housewife who doesn't have these adjuncts to modern living may buy them as they roll off the factory line. Effective voluntary conservation of what is already in American homes combined with voluntary rationing among consumers will permit healthier reconversion and more gradual and sounder fulfillment of public needs as well as dreamed-of luxuries. No group—Government, industry, trade, or consumer—wants to see a mad scramble. Such a scramble would only lead to false values and spiraling inflation.

A small, but important, example can be found in the recent soap news from the Department of Agriculture. By requiring soap manufacturers to revise their formulas for "heavy duty" laundry-types of granulated and flake soaps, the USDA expects civilians to receive 100 million pounds more of these soaps during the coming year than they would have received under the old formulas. This additional soap will mean the difference between a "shortage" and "enough." But if consumers rush to the stores and buy up more than their current needs the cry of "shortage" will ring loud. The basic obligation of one consumer to another is to buy thoughtfully and only to satisfy need.

What, How Much, and When

Remembering that war and reconstruction are still the determining factors in production of civilian goods, and remembering, too, that it takes time to switch completely the operation of a factory, to find the workers and the scattered materials, and to fill the empty pipe lines leading from manufacturers to wholesalers, jobbers, and contractors before the supply can come tumbling out on retail shelves, consumers may take comfort in the recent revocation by the WPB of some war-time controls.

During the 1-week period from July 16 to July 21, fifteen limitation orders, schedules, and directions were revoked, affecting such consumer goods as domestic sewing machines, furniture and furniture parts, and new-type railroad cars. Earlier, controls over the manufacture of bedsprings, studio couches, and inner spring mattresses had been removed; still earlier the limitation orders on the manufacture and distribution of table flatware and on enamelware were lifted. On May 22, bicycle manufacturers were allowed to resume production of prewar models, and on June 20 automobile manufacturers were given their ceilings for production during the last half of 1945 and the first half of 1946. For other commodities—domestic washing machines and domestic mechanical refrigerators—additional priorities assistance for the third-quarter production were given manufacturers.

But for each of the commodities removed from controls or given priority assistance there were certain factors limiting all-out production. The shortage of container board and textiles, for instance, will put kinks in full production of vacuum cleaners. Shortages of protective finishes, varnishes, lacquers, and paint will take their toll in lower-than-demand supplies of refrigerators, irons, washing machines, and stoves. Of course, for some of these shortages manufacturers have found efficient substitutes. So that although there has been a 70-percent drop in available supplies of pig tin since January 1, 1942, which precludes the possibility of releasing any tin for current reconversion, automobiles and refrigerators will still be manufactured. For tin solder, manufacturers will use silver-lead solders and for tinned refrigerator coils they will use aluminum refrigerator coils requiring no tinning.

Kitchen Statistics

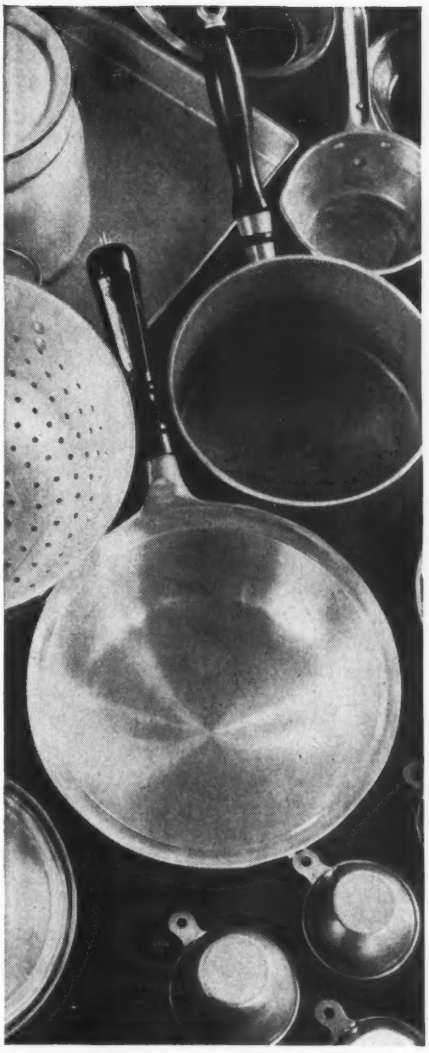
It would be difficult for any individual to list first choice of "things-I-want-to-buy." But it's pretty safe to bet that a lot of dreams of purchases center in the kitchen, and a lot of kitchen dreams center in a mechanical refrigerator. Well, the dream won't begin to be fulfilled until the early part of 1946. True, refrigerators are being made—265,000 domestic mechanical refrigerators have been authorized by the WPB for the period July through September.

To the housewife who only wants one refrigerator, 265,000 may seem a great amount, but not if she realizes that in the base year of prewar production 3,700,000 were made. The supply is actually so short and military and other noncivilian demands so great that the ordinary consumer probably won't get any at all of those coming out of factories right now. Every refrigerator manufactured during the third quarter is expected to be added to the frozen stock pile and released by WPB only to meet military, hospital, and other highly essential requirements. After all, the military camp in the Pacific needs a mechanical refrigerator to preserve food and medical supplies much more than does the American home.

A different story but also a sad one can be told for electric ranges. A maximum of 35,000 ranges has been programmed but the greater part is expected to go to the military services, to housing projects approved by the National Housing Agency, and to institutions that certify need. The new ranges aren't rationed but, in most cases, a certificate of necessity is required from consumers.

On June 7 the WPB limitation order which, since May 15, 1942, prohibited manufacture of domestic washing machines, ironers, and driers, was amended to permit resumption of domestic washing machine production. Manufacturers were given priorities assistance to turn out 350,000 washing machines during the third quarter of 1945. In addition, manufacturers are permitted to turn out more if they can obtain the necessary materials without priorities assistance. Estimates of actual production during the third quarter, however, are for only 50,000 washing machines.

So the welcome news to the housewife, whose family has increased during the war, might not mean that the local household appliance shop will be able to supply her with the washing machine she wants this month! Perhaps by the end of the year a few washing machines will be available, but it will be the spring of 1946 before washing machines appear in any quantity, and even this quantity will be small in compari-



Pots and pans—once more moving onto retail shelves, but not until December.

There is enough soap for essential needs, but not enough for hoarding or waste.

Vacuum cleaners will be coming to market in the spring and early summer of next year.

son with the 2 million produced during the peak prewar years.

As a result of the revocation, June 11, 1945, of the order prohibiting production of domestic vacuum cleaners, manufacturers will again take up production but, since there is a continuing scarcity of textiles and some other important materials, it is expected that production will reach only about 40,000 during the current period. Vacuum cleaners, in any quantities, won't appear until the late spring or early summer of 1946, and it will be some time after that before the 1940 rate of 1,903,000 cleaners can be reached.

By summer of 1946 sewing machines ought to be appearing in retail stores, with the experts counting on about 10,000 during the current production period and more as the bottlenecks in material shortages are gradually removed. But the 1941 rate of 800,000 machines won't be reached before the latter part of 1946.

Production controls have also been taken off of electric irons and WPB has given priorities assistance for the manufacture of approximately 500,000 irons during the third quarter. If manufacturers want to exceed this number they will have to do so without the help of priority ratings on important materials and parts.

Since an estimated total of 1,076,000 electric irons were produced during the first half of 1945, it's safe to assume that by early next year housewives will be finding irons in retail stores. But, again, a comparison with the normal prewar production of 5 million irons casts a shadow over what at first looks like a bright picture.

WPB expects that by the last quarter of 1945 somewhere between 25,000 to 50,000 electric toasters of all types will be available and consumers should be able to take care of most of their needs for this commodity by the spring of 1946. Assistance to manufacturers to produce about 75,000 bicycles of prewar specifications during July, August, and September should mean that by the first few months of 1946 bicycles will be appearing in quantity at the retail level. It might even be possible to make a long-wished-for bicycle the Christmas present for one member of the family.

And if the consumer is hard put to it for a Christmas present for Uncle George there will be alarm clocks in the stores by Christmas shopping time. But, unless Uncle George is a worker who can't get up without an alarm, maybe some war stamps would be more appropriate.

During the critical third quarter period of 1945 production, when many manufacturers will for the first time in 3 years produce once more their peacetime consumer durable items, other goods in addition to those already mentioned are expected to be turned out. For instance, priority assistance has been granted for the manufacture of 120,000 dozen galvanized garbage cans, for 6 million dollars' worth of enamelware, for 400,000 baby carriages, for 75,000 ice boxes, for 980,000 razor blades, and for 20 million dollars' worth of bedding, including dual-purpose sleeping equipment, box and crib springs, metal beds, inner spring mattresses, and bedsprings. During this third quarter, cameras—about 15 percent of the number of cameras produced in 1941—will be available and during the last quarter of this year manufacturers expect to turn out about 25 percent of the number of carpet sweepers they produced in their peak prewar year. Approximately 33½ million pieces of table flatware and hollow ware, produced in the third quarter, will be available to civilians. But although restrictions have been lifted on the production and sale of electronic and radio parts, very few complete radios and combination radio-phonographs will be sold to civilians, until next year.

Of course, every housekeeper wants to know when she'll be able to buy DDT for use in her home. And no one knows just when. It's true that for the first time since its discovery DDT will be made available to civilians. But in the next breath we learn that "civilian" means hospital supervisors, public health officials, and certified farmers in serious need of it. So long as the military in any phase of its work needs DDT for the control of insects, the civilian at home will have to be content with the insect sprays they've been using.

How Much and How Different?

The next thing the consumer wants to know is: Will the new goods coming off the production lines be very different from the prewar models and will I be able to afford them?

Enthusiastic copy writers have done a thorough job of stirring the imagination of consumers about the postwar dream world where the many industrial developments of the war will be turned into peacetime goods. It is true that the scientific developments produced as a result of war stimulation will eventually be adopted into every line of consumer goods, but it is not true that the first

Even youngsters know that a bicycle for Christmas this year is a possibility.

models coming out of factories today will be anywhere near the future "postwar" model. Manufacturers are trying to produce commodities that will answer the urgent needs of consumers right now; they are trying to get something out in spite of all kinds of material and component shortages. It will be some time before the discoveries of the laboratory can be translated into significantly improved commodities.

The 1945 and early 1946 models will, of course, be different from the 1940 and 1941 models. They will be different because manufacturers won't be able to get and use the same materials in the same quantities as they did before the war. Substitutions will be made. In some cases, such as in clocks, refrigerators, and stoves, the 1945 model will be quite simple, with few "extra" features, and fewer decorations.

As for the cost to consumers, the latest word is that for all items where production is not sufficient to reduce or completely satisfy the huge pent-up demands, price controls will be in effect. Firm ceilings will be placed on such important consumer goods as automobiles, electric household refrigerators, vacuum cleaners, and home radio sets. These are the commodities in shortest supply and heaviest demand and these will have ceilings in order to prevent ruinous inflation.

Consumers can help to keep these ceilings firm by not buying the new models unless and until they need them. The watchword for the rest of 1945 and 1946 is still: Conserve what you have—buy only what you need.

CG news letter

last minute reports from U. S. Government Agencies

Problems of peace were considered at the Third Inter-American Conference on Agriculture. Delegates from Western Hemisphere countries met at Caracas, Venezuela, July 24 to August 7, to try to find ways to use the vast food and fiber resources of the Americas for the good of all people.

To provide higher living standards for the people involves more than just working out who is going to produce what after the war. Friendly governments are now thinking in terms of hemisphere **use** as well as production. Individual countries are considering means by which they can provide a better diet for their people. One way is to channel abundant foods to persons who do not have the money to buy them.

Wartime food discoveries entered in the discussions at Caracas. New discoveries in handling, processing, and packaging food will have a direct bearing on foods we get here in this country.

Consumers in the United States want coffee, bananas, and other products that our neighbors to the South produce. They, in turn, can use articles we manufacture in the United States. Fair exchange means better economic conditions here and there.

The Conference in Caracas opened on the 162d anniversary of the birth of Simon Bolivar, the great liberator of South America. It was fitting that on that date the nations of North, South, and Central America met to plan for peace.

Sugar is scarce—but that's not news if you have recently tried to spend your sugar stamp. Stocks are at very low levels and consumers are largely depending on current production for sugar.

The Cuban crop is short because of severe drought. The sugar beet crop in the United States, though larger than the crop last year, is below prewar levels. And there will be no sugar from the Philippines in 1945; perhaps very little in 1946.

The situation is not a happy one for 1945, and looking ahead there isn't much relief in sight for the first half of 1946.

Consumers can help by "using with care," canning with less sugar, and using substitutes whenever practical.

The meat picture is a little brighter. Not that the over-all supply is larger but distribution is better and more meat is moving to city consumers. This is partly due to limitations on nonfederally inspected plants and partly to a reduction in Government buying. Nonfederally inspected meat is not allowed to move across State lines, therefore, it is not available for civilian interstate trade or Government purchase. Limitations on nonfederally inspected plants have increased the amount of meat channeled through federally inspected plants, and as the Government has reduced its purchases of this meat, more has become available for folks in the city.

Nine out of ten accidents might be prevented by intelligent foresight and action, if every person understood how important the job is, according to Secretary of Agriculture Anderson. The total cost to agriculture for all farm accidents is about 1 billion dollars each year. To do our best to eliminate risk, we must make a careful check of the hazards in our homes and on our farms. We must learn safety and teach it to our families.

The civilian jeep—the peacetime four-wheel-drive counterpart of the military jeep has been provided with a dollar-and-cent ceiling price by the Office of Price Administration. The retail ceiling price is $1,090, f.o.b. Toledo, Ohio, plus taxes and the customary trade additions for transportation, handling, and optional equipment. "This ceiling price is somewhat higher than the prewar selling price of light passenger cars, because the civilian jeep basically is not a light passenger car but rather a four-wheel-drive ½-ton truck designed for utility trucking and farm and country use," says OPA.

"If we were to have soap rationing, it would be necessary for me, as Secretary of Agriculture, to authorize it," Clinton P. Anderson said, "and I do not plan to issue such authorization. Operation of a soap rationing program is just too great a problem to undertake now. It would be a little easier on all of us if people would buy sensibly, buying only what is needed, instead of starting runs on scarce stocks. Supplies will continue to flow to retail outlets, so let's buy what we want as we need it."

More soap will be available to civilians as the result of a recent order of the USDA. The order will increase U. S. production of household "heavy duty" laundry-type soaps 10 percent (100,000,000 pounds), by requiring manufacturers to use additional quantities of water-softening "builder" materials in their products. And military requirements for soap will be lower during the coming 6 months, thus making it unnecessary to reduce further the quotas of fats available for the manufacture of civilian soaps. These facts should persuade homemakers to discontinue the practice of raiding the shelves of stores as soon as a new shipment of soap arrives. Some have been doing this because they fear soap rationing. But such fears are unfounded according to the Secretary of Agriculture.

Homemakers need no longer scrimp on spuds. A big crop, known as intermediate to distinguish it from early and late crops, is now being harvested—about 30.5 million bushels. These intermediate potatoes are of good quality and are not nearly so perishable as early crop potatoes. They do not, however, keep as well as the fall varieties.

The principal producing areas for "intermediates" are Long Island, N. Y., and the States of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, New Jersey, Colorado, Nebraska, Texas, and Kansas. As the peak movement of the total 1945 crop is expected in September, taters ought to be a good buy now.

Potatoes also are a good energy food. They contain vitamins B and C, iron and other minerals, and starch. For tips on getting the most good from potatoes, write to the Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C. and ask for folder AWI-85, "Potatoes in Popular Ways."

Food Pools in local communities provide an outlet for excess garden production. Paul C. Stark, Director of Home Food Supply of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, has asked that civic-minded persons be enlisted in carrying out a community food pool program so as to make maximum use of homegrown foods.

Swap with your neighbors the Victory Garden produce you do not need for the family supply. Or donate part of your "crop" to charitable institutions. Natural food pool centers are the community canning projects where vegetables can be put up for assignment to school lunch programs, local charities, or other worthy causes.

If your community does not have a food pool, why not help to organize one in order to make sure that no food is wasted?

A tomato aspic salad is colorful, tempting, and can help meet the day's vitamin needs. It also is easy on the ration points because canned tomato juice from which it can be easily made is now point free. And for variety, use tomato juice in cocktails, soups, and sauces.

Other juices rich in vitamin C and which now have zero ration point values are grapefruit juice and blended (grapefruit and orange) juice. These, and mixed vegetable juice which also may be had without ration points, are good, morning, noon, and night.

GUIDE POSTS

Bare Feet

Bed covers too short to cover a sleeper's feet on a chilly night are likely to be charged with "incompatibility." Short covers are not only uncomfortable but they wear out sooner than those of the right size. Sheets should be at least a yard longer and wider than the mattress, to tuck in well. To enlarge a sheet, sew on a strip of old sheeting or new preshrunk muslin. Make a flat-fell seam. Blankets may be lengthened with outing cloth, good parts of a worn blanket, or even sheeting.

Remote Control Shoppers

Will the housewife of the future be able to select her purchases without stirring from her home? According to some, television views will give the purchaser-by-mail an added check on what she is buying. In a recent commercial experiment it was reported that a housewife in an isolated home in Greenwich, Conn., looked over a number of articles of New York merchandise displayed in a Madison Avenue showroom, 30 miles away. She selected one of two coffeemakers of different types as easily as if she had been in the New York showroom handling the articles themselves. Silent gestures with eyes and hands were understood by the purchaser, indicating that it might be difficult to put anything over on the "tele tele" customer.

Short and Far Between

The belle of the ball usually wears a long dress—but not in Canada during wartime. It is "not done" there, because for 2 years the Wartime Prices and Trade Board has forbidden the "manufacture for sale" of long dresses except for brides and religious orders. Manufacturers who sell their goods through retail stores are forced to comply with the regulation. Individual dressmakers and home dressmakers are urged to comply, in order to save dress materials.

Tea For You

Some sip punch and some sip tea! If it's tea for you, you'll probably have as much this year as last, but it'll be black. No green tea is being imported.

The present U. S. supply of tea is coming from India and Ceylon. During prewar years, large quantities came from the Dutch East Indies, Japan, and China.

All tea—green and black—grows on the same kind of bush. Different varieties result from differences in climate, location, soil, and methods of processing the leaves. Green tea, produced by checking fermentation after the leaves are picked, comes only from China and Japan.

For a Professional Look

Now is the time to remodel that old coat. Knowing some of the tricks of the trade helps many a woman to give a tailor-made touch to a coat for herself or the children. For detailed instructions on how to go about making a coat, ask the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C., for Farmers' Bulletin No. 1894—Coat Making at Home.

Fancy Footwear

Many selections of women's shoes during the past year of war have lacked their one-time variety. Many looked as much alike as the ration stamps surrendered for them. But now it will be different. Fancy stitching, overlays, lacing, and other decorations will again appear on the footwear of women of fashion! The ban on certain styles and decorations of shoes has now been lifted by the War Production Board.

Week-Long Day

Fruits and vegetables are subject to aging, withering, overheating, freezing, loss of vitamins, and decay after being harvested. Every day an apple or pear is held at room temperature its storage life is decreased by more than a week, says C. O. Bratley, plant pathologist of the USDA. At 70° F. apples soften about twice as fast as at 50°; at 50° about twice as fast as at 40°; and at 40° about twice as fast as at 32°. Decay and loss of vitamins are affected in the same way by different temperatures. Research has shown that proper control of temperatures can keep spoilage at a minimum.

LISTEN TO CONSUMER TIME

Every Saturday—Coast to Coast
over N. B. C. 12:15 p. m. EWT
11:15 a. m. CWT
10:15 a. m. MWT
9:15 a. m. PWT

Dramatizations, interviews, questions and answers on consumer problems. Tune in.
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☆ U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1945—661154